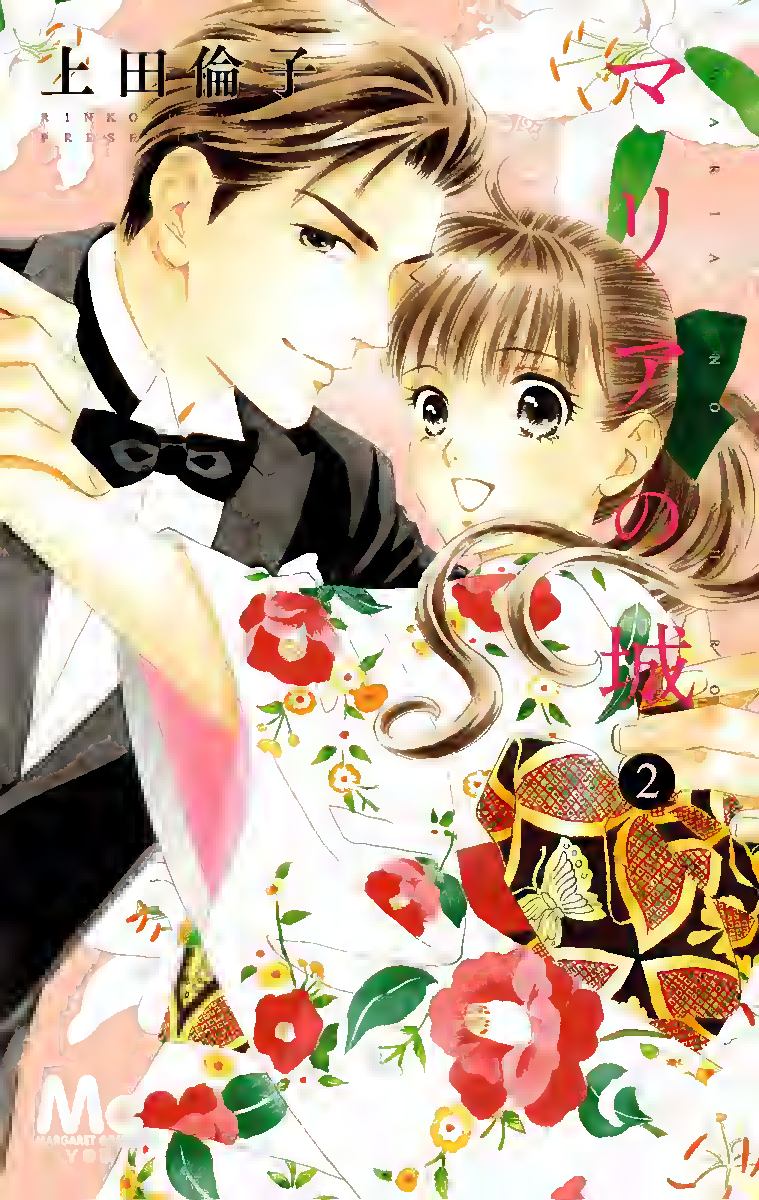
上田倫子
マリアの城
2

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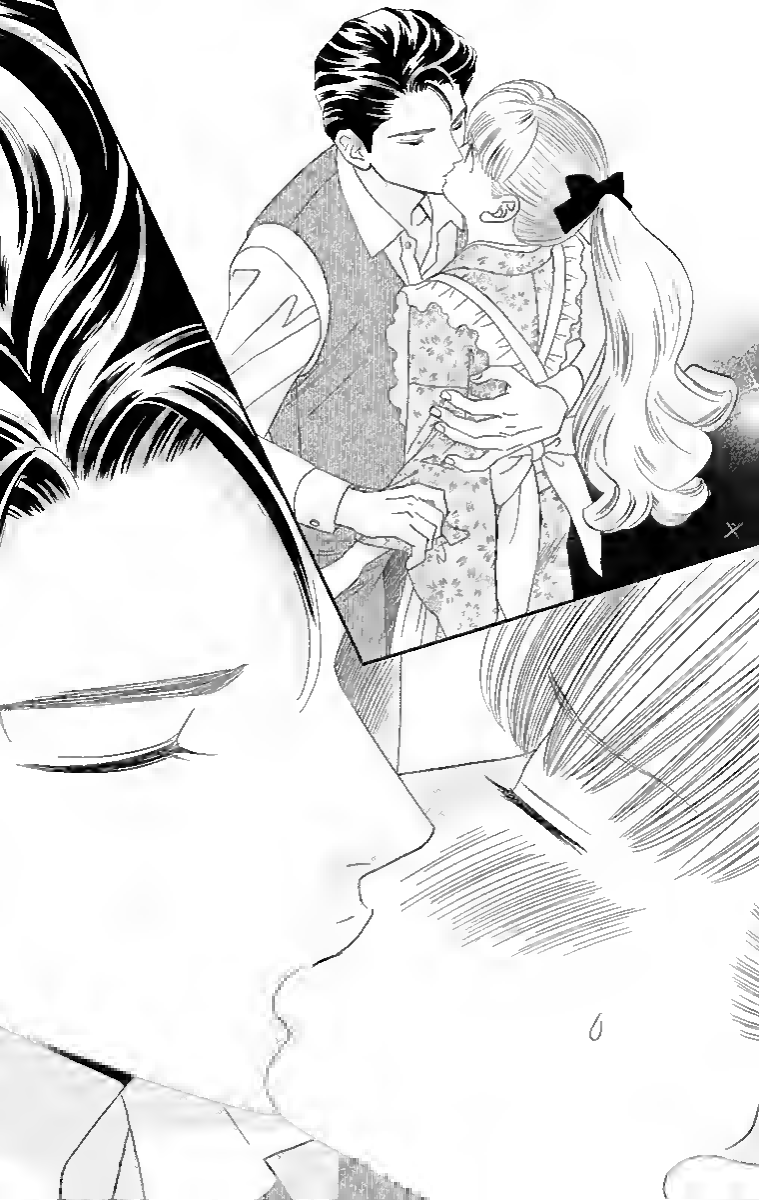
THE STORY SO FAR

IN THE SPRING OF 1921 OF THE TAISHO ERA MARIA, WHO HAD LOST HER PARENTS, COLLAPSED IN FRONT OF HER OLD HOUSE. SHE LEARNED THAT IT WAS BEING USED AS A DORM FOR THE DOCTORS EMPLOYED AT IMPERIAL MARIA HOSPITAL FROM SEI, THE YOUNG DOCTOR WHO SAVED HER. REMEMBERING HER FATHER SAID HE WAS SET UP BY TOUDOU, SHE DECIDES TO POSE AS A MAID IN ORDER TO FIND THE TRUTH. AS CHIEF TOUDOU'S SON, SEI REQUESTS MARIA TO BE HIS PARTNER AT A PARTY. AND THERE SHE MEETS A FEMALE DOCTOR TACHIBANA, WHO COOPERATES WITH HER TO UNVEIL THE CHIEF DIRECTOR'S WRONGDOINGS. AFTER THAT, MARIA FINDS A MYSTERIOUS DIARY IN SEI'S ROOM, BUT SHE CAN'T DECIPHER THE MEANING OF ITS CONTENTS. IN ORDER TO SOLVE ITS RIDDLES, SHE GIVES THE DIARY TO DR. TACHIBANA. AMONGST THIS, SEI'S BROTHER, HIDEKI, WHO'S BEEN STAYING IN GERMANY, MAKES HIS RETURN!

♥くわしい物語は、「マリアの城」①巻（大好評発売中）でどうぞ!!

マリアの城
第6章



STOP IT...
パチーン
SLAP
I AM A MAID,
NOT A PROSTI-TUTE!

WHAT...
CLATTER
CLATTER
HOW COULD YOU?
THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME.
WHAT AM I... DOING?

GOOD MORNING, MARI-CHAN!
CHIRP
CHIRP
GOOD MORNING. BREAKFAST IS READY
Yay omelet
WESTERN FOOD TODAY.
NOTHING
HUH?
IT'S REALLY GOOD.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SEI-KUN?

GOOD MORNING EVERY-BODY!
I AM TOUDOU HIDEKI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF IMPERIAL MARIA HOSPITAL. I'LL BE DIRECTING YOU ALL STARTING TODAY.

CHIEF EXECU-TIVE?!
WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN?!
IN THE NEAR FUTURE, I WILL BECOME THE CHIEF EXEC-UTIVE OF THE HOSPITAL, SO ACT AS IF I ALREADY AM.
THE TRUTH IS, NOT YET.
WHO IS HE?
SEI-KUN'S BROTHER.

HERE ARE THE PATIENT CHARTS.
HE WAS IN GERMANY UNTIL RECENTLY.
I SEE.
WELL THEN, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE PATIENTS IN THE WEST BUILDING.
YOU CAN'T TAKE ALL OF THE SIMPLE CASES!
WHAT...
WAIT!

I BELIEVE YOU WERE NABESHIMA-KUN, RIGHT?
YEAH
WATCH YOUR TONE.
WE SHOULD LET THE GENERAL MANAGER, DR TOUDOU, DR SEI MAKE THE DECISIONS CONCERNING THE ASSIGNMENT OF PATIENTS
WHAT DID YOU SAY?

THANK YOU, DR. TACHIBANA.
OF COURSE
TIME TO MAKE THE ROUNDS
ARE YOU GOING TO BE ON SEI'S SIDE?

I'M THE ELDEST SON SO IT'S A GIVEN THAT THE HOSPITAL WILL BE MINE.
WHAT?
DON'T YOU THINK IT'D BE IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS TO SIDE WITH ME?

I'M NOT SIDING WITH ANYONE
EX-CUSE ME?
I STUDIED PHYSIOGNOMY TOO, SO I CAN READ YOUR EXPRESSION
I KNOW YOU ADMIRE STRENGTH IN MEN.
PLEASE STOP WITH THIS NON-SENSE!

CEO
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.
GLANCE
NO WAY I'LL LET HIM BECOME THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE.
TAP
TAP
IF THE RUMOR THAT THEY CAUSED THE DEATH OF THE PREVIOUS CHIEF IS TRUE...
CLACK
I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOSPITAL UNDER THEIR CARE.

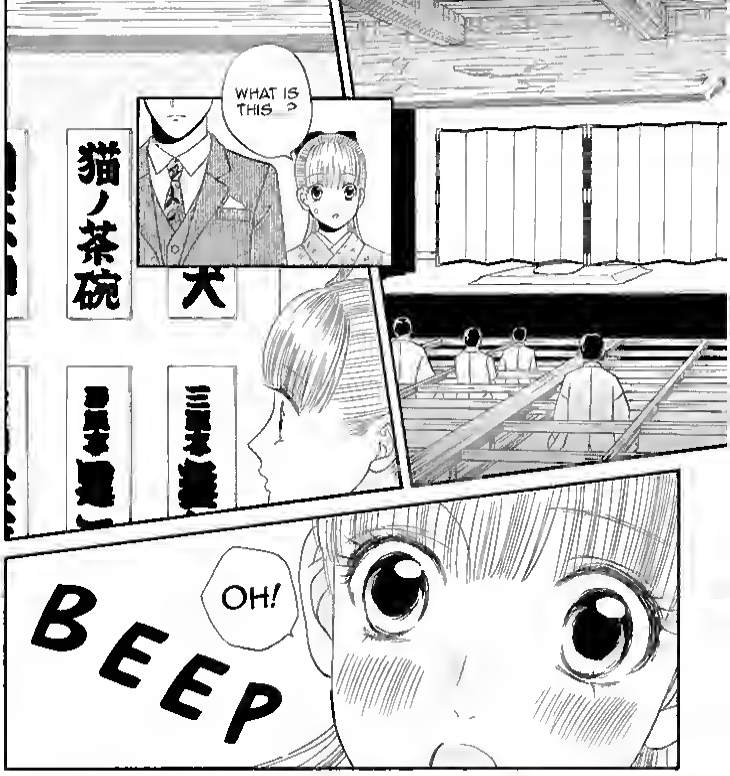
ガコ
CLUNCK
THERE'S...
ガラッ
RATTLE
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
A FALSE BOTTOM?
FLIP
THIS ACCOUNT BOOK...!

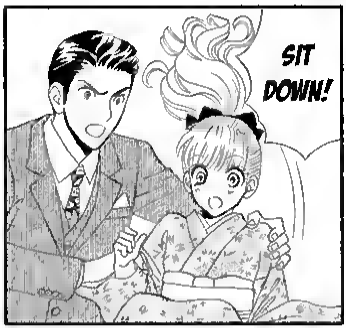
I'LL EXPOSE CHIEF TOUDOU'S WRONGDOINGS AND HAVE SEI-SAN KICKED OUT OF THE HOUSE!
I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE.
THANK YOU, GOOD WORK
YOU TOO.

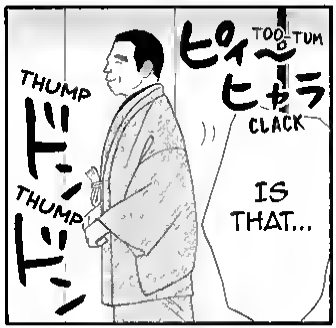
It's Friday today.
There has to be something.
HE'S WALKING THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM HOME
In his diary, the strange codes always appeared on Fridays.

5 "Place to sit and watch"
WELCOME!
THIS IS...
FIF-TEEN...
OH NO, I FORGOT MY WALLET!
WHAAAT?
GENERAL ADMISSION FEE IS FIFTEEN *SEN!
WHAT?
I CAN'T LET YOU IN FOR FREE.
* T/N Sen = 1/10 yen in the past

KYA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHAT A COINCI-DENCE...
THIS WAY.
WHAT...
Here fifteen sen
SHE'S WITH ME.
Thank you very much!


WHAT IS THIS...?
猫ノ茶碗
犬
OH!
BEEP

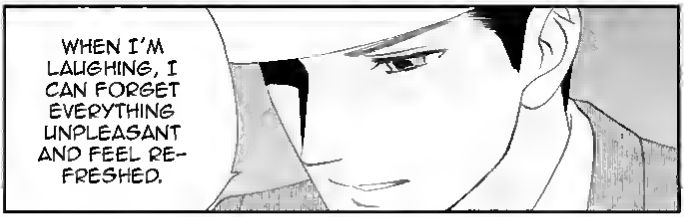

SIT DOWN!

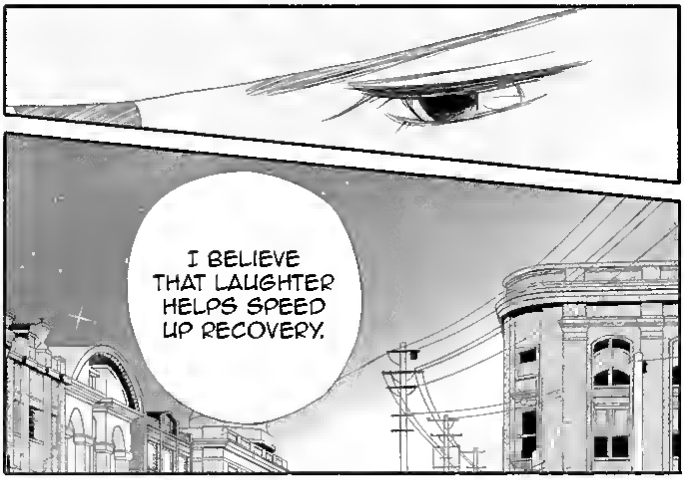

TOO-TUM
ピィ～ヒャラ
CLACK
IS THAT...
THUMP
ツン
THUMP
ツン

UHHHHHH...
MY STOMACH'S NOT FEELING WELL,
JUMP
CLUNK
SO IF YOU DON'T START LAUGHING AT MY JOKES, I'M GOING OFFSTAGE.
わはは
Ahahahaha
THIS STORY IS ABOUT A MAN GOING ALONG THE NAKASENDO TRAIL AROUND THE ISHIHARA AREA...
What?

Ahahaha
あはは
I SUPPOSE THIS OLD MAN MUST NOT KNOW THE VALUE OF THE PLATE!
わ
A ha
はは
ha
Hee
ひ
THAT'S FINE
I WANT THAT CHIPPED, DIRTY PLATE!
ひっひっひ
Hehehe
AHHH...
IF I LET IT EAT FROM THIS BOWL, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SELL THE CAT FOR THREE YEN.
MY GOD THAT WAS FUNNY!
はは
Ahaha

I LAUGH, TOO.
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN YOU LAUGH.


WHEN I'M LAUGHING, I CAN FORGET EVERYTHING UNPLEASANT AND FEEL RE-FRESHED.


I BELIEVE THAT LAUGHTER HELPS SPEED UP RECOVERY.

WHEN YOU'RE SICK, YOU GET WORRIED AND DEPRESSED.
RECOVERY?
WHEN YOU'RE DEPRESSED, YOUR BODY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM IS AFFECTED AND INSTEAD OF GETTING BETTER, YOU ONLY GET WORSE
TO FIGHT THAT, YOU NEED TO LAUGH YOUR DISEASE AWAY.

THEY SAY THAT GOOD FORTUNE WILL COME TO THOSE WHO LAUGH
LAUGH AND LAUGH,
AND RECAPTURE YOUR OPTIMISM.
EXACTLY!
I WANT TO SET UP A *RAKUGO GATHERING AT THE HOSPITAL.

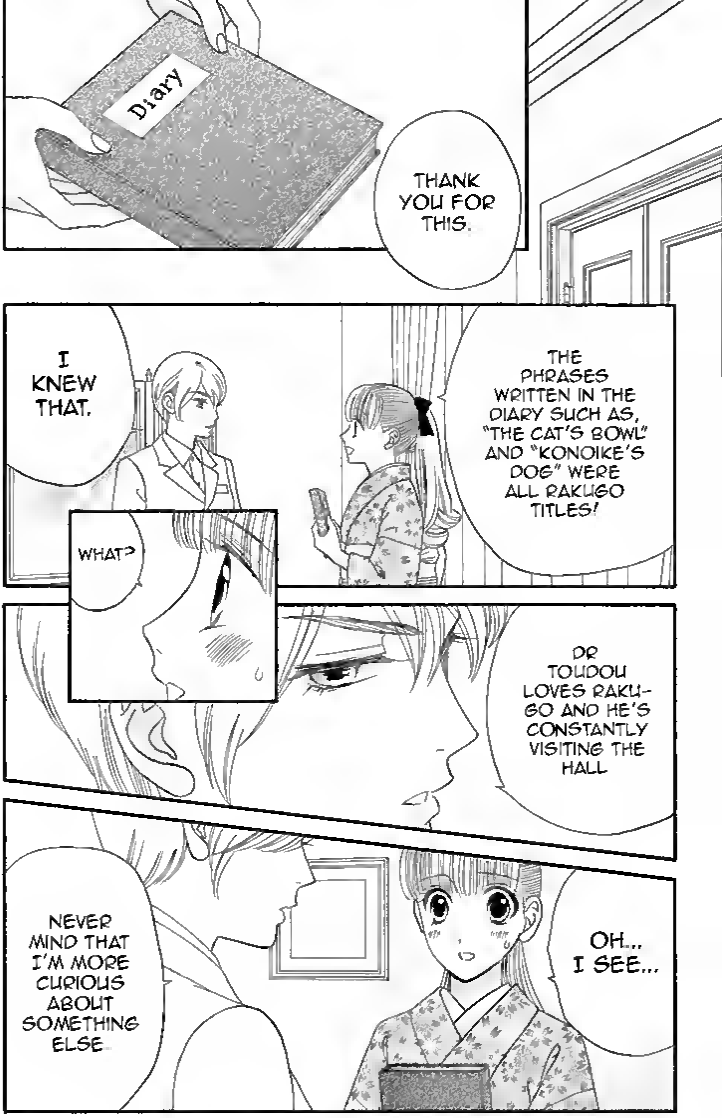
*T/N Rakugo is a form of Japanese entertainment performed by a lone storyteller onstage.

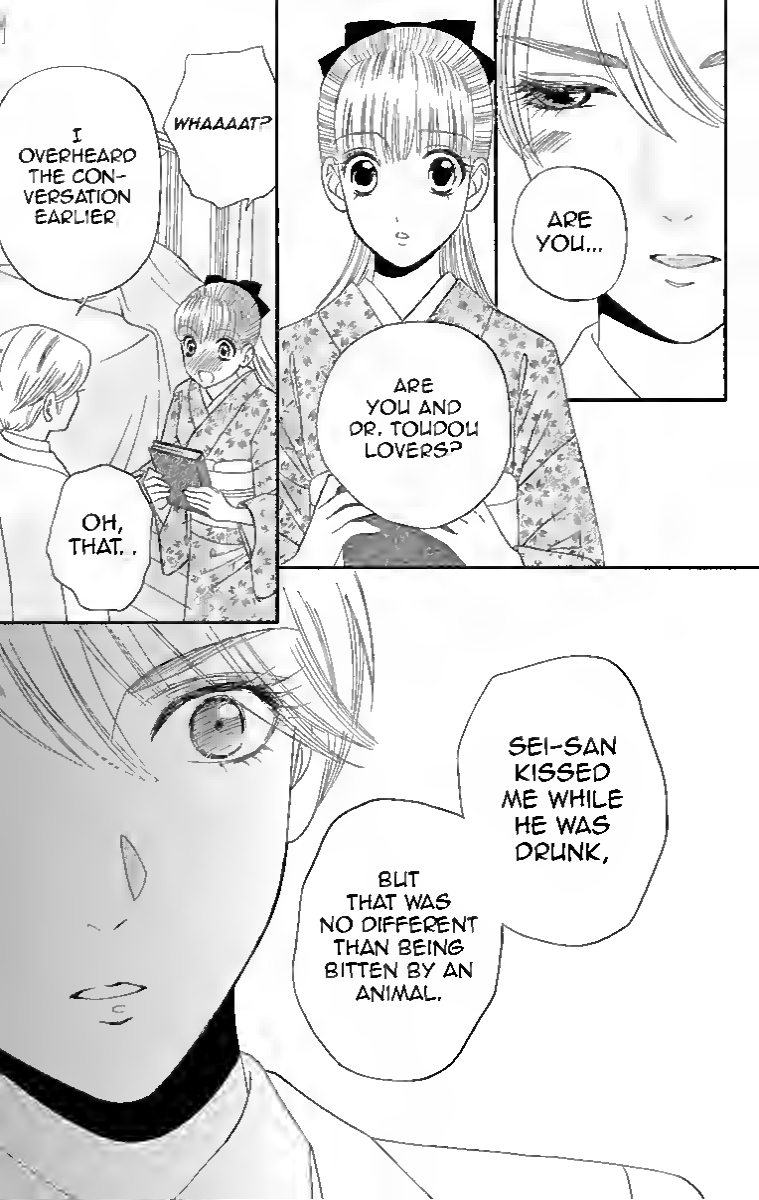
AT THE HOSPITAL?
OF COURSE, THE CHIEF WILL NEVER APPROVE OF SUCH A THING.
HE'S ALL ABOUT THE PROFIT.
THIS WOULD BE IF I BECAME THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE THOUGH...
A RAKUGO EVENT AT THE HOSPITAL
I THINK THAT'S A GREAT IDEA.

I ALSO HAVE TO TELL MARI-SAN ABOUT THE CHECK REGISTRY I FOUND IN THE CHIEF'S OFFICE
I MUST RETURN DR. TOUDOU'S DIARY.
THAT'S
I'M SORRY ABOUT YESTER-DAY.
HUH...
EVEN THOUGH I WAS DRUNK, THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR WHAT I DID.

IT'S FINE ALREADY
NO, IT'S NOT!
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BE YOUR FIRST TIME.
?!
パキッ
SNAP
DR. TACHIBANA!

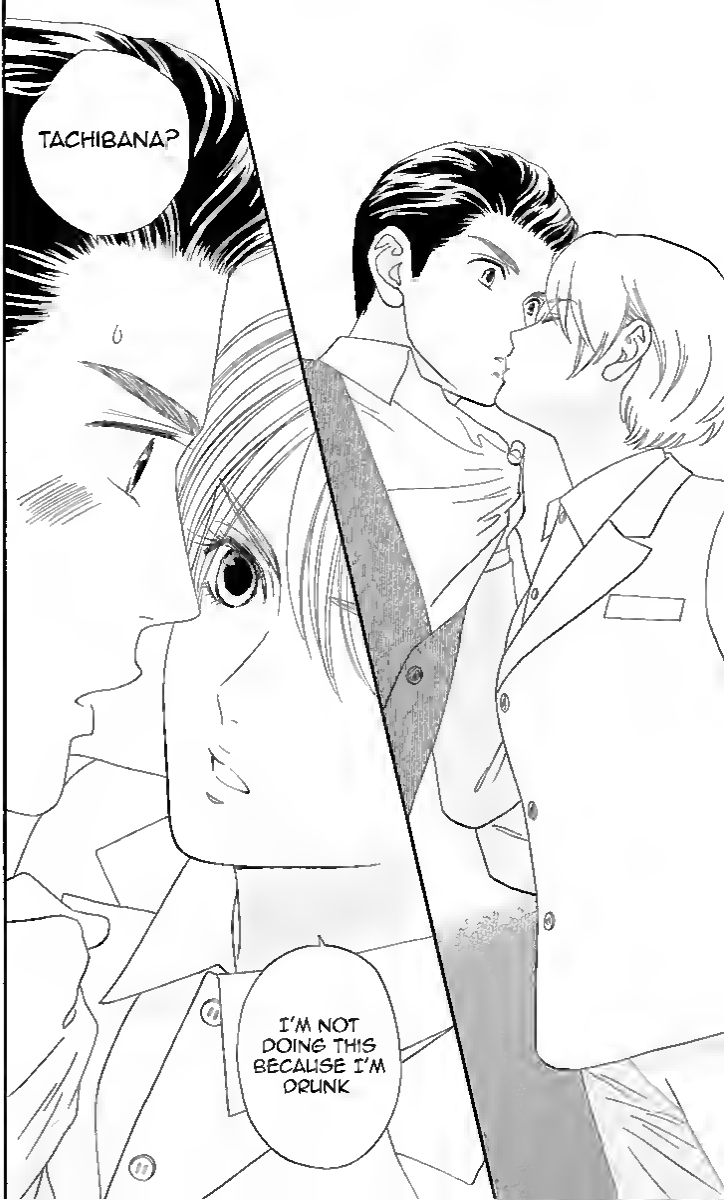
WE'RE BACK.
OH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, DR TACHIBANA?
GOOD EVENING.
I BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH HER AT THE PARTY LAST TIME.
SHE STOPPED BY TO SAY HELLO.
DR TACHIBANA, THIS WAY PLEASE.
?
STAY AT YOUR LEISURE.


Diary
THANK YOU FOR THIS.
I KNEW THAT.
THE PHRASES WRITTEN IN THE DIARY SUCH AS, "THE CAT'S BOWL" AND "KONOIKE'S DOG" WERE ALL RAKUGO TITLES!
WHAT?
DR TOUDOU LOVES RAKU-GO AND HE'S CONSTANTLY VISITING THE HALL
NEVER MIND THAT I'M MORE CURIOUS ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE
OH... I SEE...


ARE YOU...
ARE YOU AND DR. TOUDOU LOVERS?
WHAAAAT?
I OVERHEARD THE CONVERSATION EARLIER
OH, THAT..
SEI-SAN KISSED ME WHILE HE WAS DRUNK,
BUT THAT WAS NO DIFFERENT THAN BEING BITTEN BY AN ANIMAL.

DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT THE CHIEF?
WHAT?
KISS...
LET'S JUST FORGET ABOUT THAT AND MOVE ON.
OH, NO NOTHING.
I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO LOOK AROUND
I'M... GOING TO LEAVE NOW.
NOTH-ING?

STEP
STEP
LEAVING ALREADY?
YOU SHOULD AT LEAST HAVE SOME COFFEE
YOU BEAST!
WHAT?
GRAB


TACHIBANA?
I'M NOT DOING THIS BECAUSE I'M DRUNK

WHAT..
バ
THUD
バ
THUD
バン
SLAM
WOOOWW!

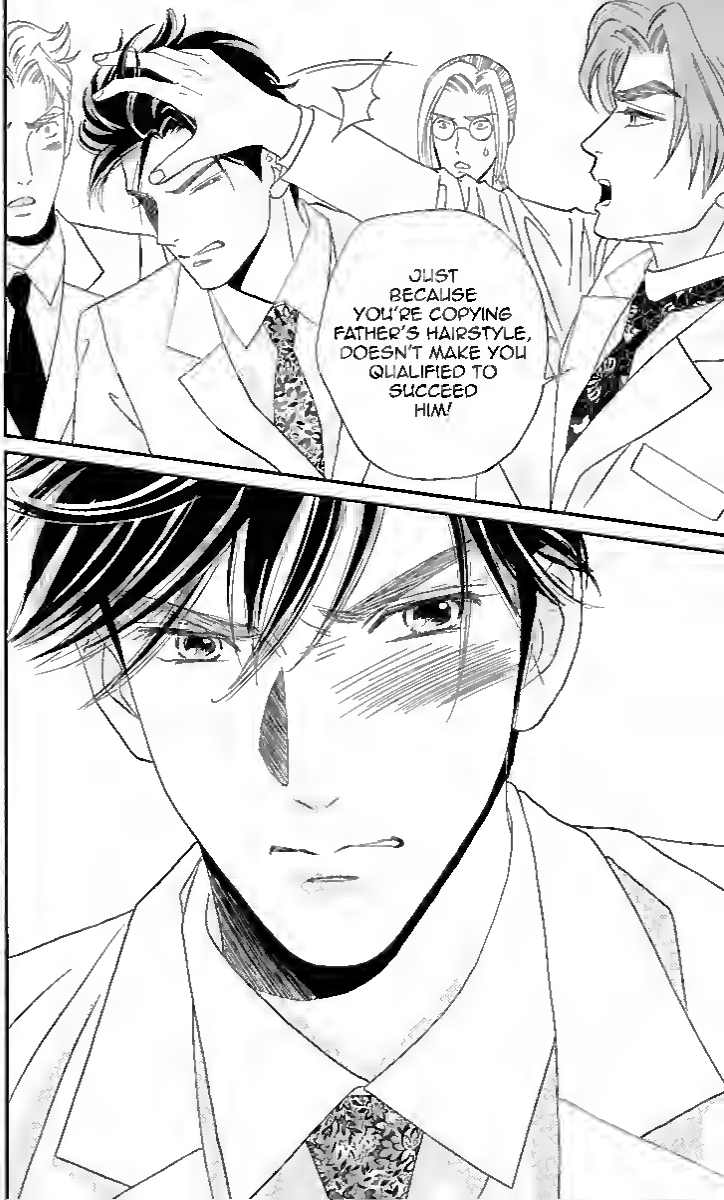
THE DIARY..
I HAVE TO RETURN IT TO SEI-SAN'S ROOM.

If I had to say though, then it would be this...
There was nothing suspicious in there.
Diary
At this rate, I won't be able to prove my father's innocence.

I have to do something!
I'M AGAINST DECREASING THE NUMBER OF BEDS FOR PATIENTS!

WE'LL UPGRADE TO PRIVATE ROOMS
THERE ARE MANY INPATIENTS WHO WANT TO FEEL LIKE THEY'RE STAYING IN A HOTEL.
IT'S NOT RIGHT TO SERVE ONLY THE WEALTHY!
SOON, I'LL BE TAKING OVER THE HOSPITAL
PAT
THE DOOR IS THAT WAY IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH ME

YOU JUST CAME BACK FROM ABROAD. NOBODY IN THIS HOSPITAL WILL FOLLOW YOU!
ARE YOU STILL THINKING YOU CAN TAKE OVER THE HOSPITAL EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE AN ADOPTED KID?
ADOPT-ED?!
Chatter
DR. TOUDOU?!


JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE COPYING FATHER'S HAIRSTYLE, DOESN'T MAKE YOU QUALIFIED TO SUCCEED HIM!

ガチャ
CLACK
EXCUSE ME,
I BROUGHT SOME BREAD FOR SNACK
AH...
Mari-chan!
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN
TO SHOW MY APPRECIATION, CAN I TAKE YOU OUT TO DINNER?

WHAT?
POOR CINDERELLA, WORKING FOR THESE FOUL MEN...
WOULD YOU BE MY PRINCESS FOR THE NIGHT?
IDIOT,
SHE'S GONNA TURN YOU DOWN.
UMMM...
I WOULD LOVE TO.
SEI-SAN, CAN I GO WITH HIM TONIGHT?
WHA...

DONE!
I'LL BE AT YOUR PLACE THIS EVENING! ♡
SEI?!
WHAT?
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
If I get close to Hideki-san,
I might find the evidence I need.

Maria no Shiro

Translator: Eliza02
Proofreader: Pantherocker & Chiisai-hime
Cleaner: `Roze`
Typesetter: Kokoromi
Quality Checker: `Roze`
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